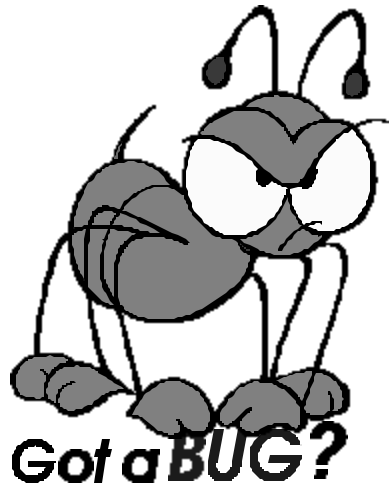


## What is a Pesticide?

A pesticide is any substance or mixture of substances intended for preventing, destroying, repelling, or mitigating any pest. Pests can be insects, mice and other animals, unwanted plants (weeds), fungi, or microorganisms like bacteria and viruses. Though often misunderstood to refer only to *insecticides*, the term pesticide also applies to herbicides, fungicides, and various other substances used to control pests. Under United States law, a pesticide is also any substance or mixture of substances intended for use as a plant regulator, defoliant, or desiccant.



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Department of  
Agriculture, Markets &  
Food

Division of Pesticide  
Control

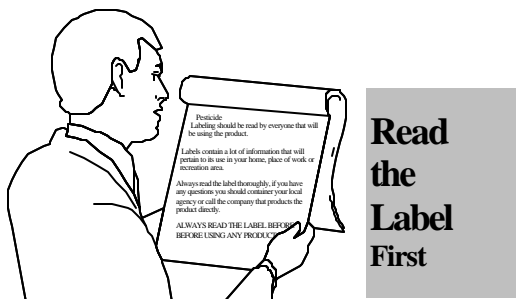
25 Capitol Street, Concord, NH 03302

(603) 271-3550

# What is a Pesticide?



**USEFUL  
INFORMATION  
FOR  
HOMEOWNERS**



By their nature, many pesticides may pose some risk to humans, animals, or the environment because they are designed to kill or otherwise adversely affect living organisms. At the same time, pesticides are often useful because of their ability to control disease-causing organisms, insects, weeds, or other pests. The pesticide label is your guide to using pesticides safely and effectively. It contains pertinent information that you should read and understand before you use a pesticide product.

*Many household products are pesticides. Did you know that all of these common products are considered pesticides?*

- *Cockroach sprays and baits*
- *Insect repellents for personal use.*
- *Rat and other rodent poisons.*
- *Flea and tick sprays, powders, and pet collars.*
- *Kitchen, laundry, and bath disinfectants and sanitizers.*
- *Products that kill mold and mildew.*
- *Some lawn and garden products, such as weed killers.*
- *Some swimming pool chemicals.*

## Hotlines

The National Pesticide Information Center (NPIC) provides objective, science-based information about a variety of pesticide-related subjects, including pesticide products, recognition and management of pesticide poisonings, toxicology, and environmental chemistry. NPIC also lists state pesticide regulatory agencies, and provides links to their Websites. NPIC can be contacted at: 1-800-858-7378 or by email at [npic@ace.orst.edu](mailto:npic@ace.orst.edu). For more information, read the NPIC Factsheet at <http://www.epa.gov/pesticides/npic.htm>.



## Information Centers

The OPPTS Chemical Library at <http://www.epa.gov/opptintr/library/> supports programs under the Toxic Substances Control Act (TSCA) and the Emergency Planning and Community Right-to-Know Act (EPCRA). The Library's special collections include works on specialty

subjects such as pollution prevention, biotechnology, and risk assessment.



## Additional Information Sources

- OPP's Freedom of Information Act site at: <http://www.epa.gov/pesticides/foia/> provides information on FOIA and procedures for requesting a document from EPA through the Act.
- National Service Center for Environmental Publications (NSCEP) at: <http://www.epa.gov/ncepihom/> is a central repository for all EPA documents with over 5500 titles in paper and/or electronic format, available for distribution.
- You can browse and search the National Publications Catalog at: <http://www.epa.gov/ncepihom/catalog.html> and order EPA Publications online or by telephone at 1-800/490-9198.